

***Somerville Fire Department
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January 26, 2004

TO: Secretary, Federal Communications Commission

RE: RM-10836, Emergency Vehicle Signaling Service

This letter is being forwarded in support of the Emergency Vehicle Signaling System technology (EVSS) as proposed in RM10836. This technology is needed in the emergency vehicles of today to make responses safer for responding personnel and also the general public. Please consider the approval of this technology as we are always looking for ways to make the response of emergency vehicles safer.

I have been an emergency responder for over twenty-six years in a very compact urban setting. The last seven years as Chief of Department. The City of Somerville is a mere 4.1 square miles but has a population of over 78,000 and over 55,000 registered vehicles. Response to emergencies can at times be the most difficult and dangerous part of the operation.

I once observed a panicked driver that pulled into traffic and got struck by an eighteen wheeler resulting in life threatening injuries. I have responded to countless accidents involving responding apparatus striking a vehicle that attempted to pull to the right but the driver ahead of them did not give them sufficient room because they were unaware of the approaching apparatus. Many times vehicle operators do not even realize that you are behind them until you are right behind "their" vehicle thus resulting in slower response. Many of these drivers often appear bewildered like the fire truck dropped out of the sky when they see you behind them.

This technology appears to be an answer to some of the problems we encounter especially in the Northeast where drivers spent half the year with their windows up to beat the cold and the other half of the year up to beat the heat. Air conditioning up here used to be a "luxury" now it is considered standard.

This technology is important to public safety personnel as a tool in the tool box to making emergency response safer. Thank you for considering this technology and the impact that it will have on emergency responders.

Kevin Kelleher
Chief